

What is a Child Contact Centre?

A Child Contact Centre is a safe, friendly and neutral place where children of separated families can spend time with one or both parents and sometimes other family members. They are child-centred environments that provide toys, games and facilities that reflect the diverse needs of children affected by family breakdown. Stevenage and North Hertfordshire Child Contact Centres are affiliated to the National Association of Child Contact Centres.

How many centres are there and who runs them?

There are currently about 350 Child Contact Centres throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Trained volunteers run the majority of these centres and it is estimated that 12,000 children use them every year. All staff and volunteers are checked by the Disclosure & Barring Service prior to starting work at the centres.

Aims of our Centres

The aims of the Stevenage & North Hertfordshire Child Contact Centres are to establish meaningful contact for children with their separated parents and to encourage the involved adults to plan for the family's future contact elsewhere at a later date. With this in mind, a review will take place regularly.

Light refreshments are available at both Centres for reasonable prices.

Referrals to Stevenage & North Herts Child Contact Centres

Referrals are made by many professionals including Social Workers, CAFCASS officers, Mediators, Health Visitors, GPs, Solicitors and parents themselves. The referrer will complete an application form and make the necessary arrangements with the co-ordinator.

Please ring or email for a Referral Pack.

Charges

An administration fee of £72 covers a maximum of 12 visits after which we will require a further payment. Please note that we will not begin to process the referral until an initial £20 fee has been received. Please contact us for more information on our fees policy. In some circumstances we can provide support to cover some or all of the costs.

Donations

As we are a Voluntary Organisation we welcome donations from individuals, Churches, businesses & other organisations. A donation of £1.00 is requested from the users of the Stevenage & North Herts Child Contact Centres each time a visit takes place.

Supervision

Our Child Contact Centres we do not provide one-to-one supervision of families. Contact is initially for one parent only; use of our Centres by other family members is at the co-ordinator's discretion.

QUESTIONS SOME PARENTS ASK

Will I have to meet my ex-partner?

Not if you don't want to. There is a section on the referral form relating to this.

What happens when I get to the Centre?

The 'Visiting' parent (i.e. the parent having contact) normally arrives 10 minutes before the 'Resident' parent and child(ren). The visiting parent waits in a separate room where contact is to take place. The resident parent and child(ren) go to the waiting room. The resident parent can wait in the waiting room, after the child(ren) leave with the volunteer to go into the other room for contact, or the resident parent may leave the building providing the staff have a contact telephone number.

How long are the sessions?

We set an upper limit of 2 hours for visits taking place entirely in our Centres. Visits which include handovers can be for up to 4 hours.

How long will it be before I can stop using the Contact Centre?

This varies depending on each family's circumstances. Please note that we aim to provide a short-term 'stepping-stone' facility towards independent contact.

I don't mind my ex-partner taking the child(ren) out of the Centre. What facilities do you have for this?

We can arrange for 'hand-over' only.

Why use Child Contact Centres?

From a child....

"When Mum and Dad split up I was glad. The rowing stopped and Mum did not cry anymore. After a while though I began to miss my Dad. When I asked Mum she said it was best that I did not see him, as she didn't want him coming to the house. Dad must have missed me too because he went to a solicitor who arranged for us to meet at a Child Contact Centre. We have been meeting there for about six months and I always look forward to Saturday afternoons."

From a parent....

"I was shown into the hall... suddenly the boys came running to me, their arms open, both shouting "DADDY, DADDY, DADDY!" Big hugs for each one. It was like a rugby scrum only for once I was crying. They had not forgotten me."

From a volunteer....

"We need to support children in developing successful relationships..."

For further information please contact the co-ordinator:

Lin Martin

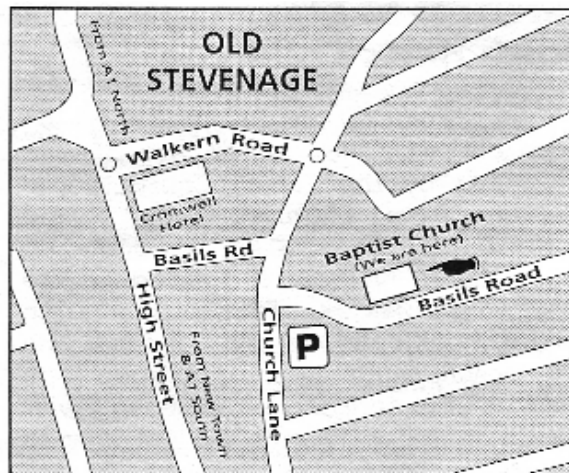
Stevenage & North Hertfordshire Child Contact Centres

c/o Hampson Park Community Centre

**Webb Rise
Stevenage
SG1 5QU**

Telephone: 07 563 727 033

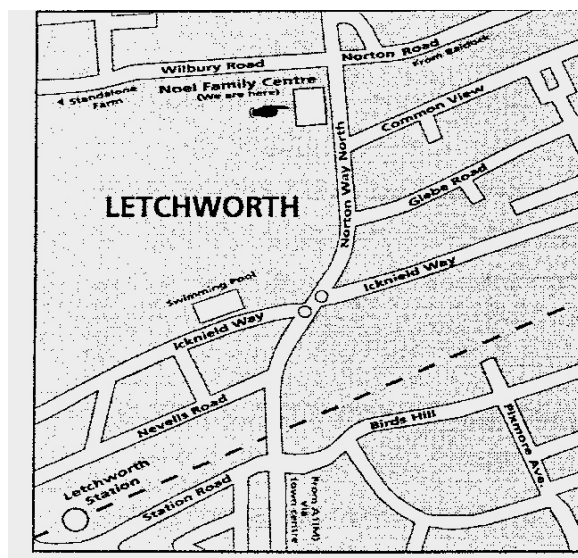
Email: snhccc@hotmail.co.uk



Bunyan Baptist Church Hall

Basils Road, Stevenage Old Town
SG1 3PY

11.00am to 3.00pm
2nd & 4th Saturdays each month



Noel Family Support Service

1 Norton Way, Letchworth SG6 1BY
10.00am to 2.00pm Saturdays (weekly)

Stevenage & North Hertfordshire Child Contact Centres Information Leaflet for Families



07 563 727 033

www.snhccc.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1071704

